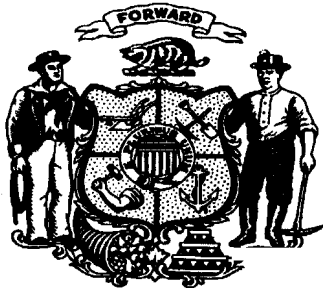


# **Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development 1999-2001 Biennial Report**

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**Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development  
Office of the Secretary  
October 2001**



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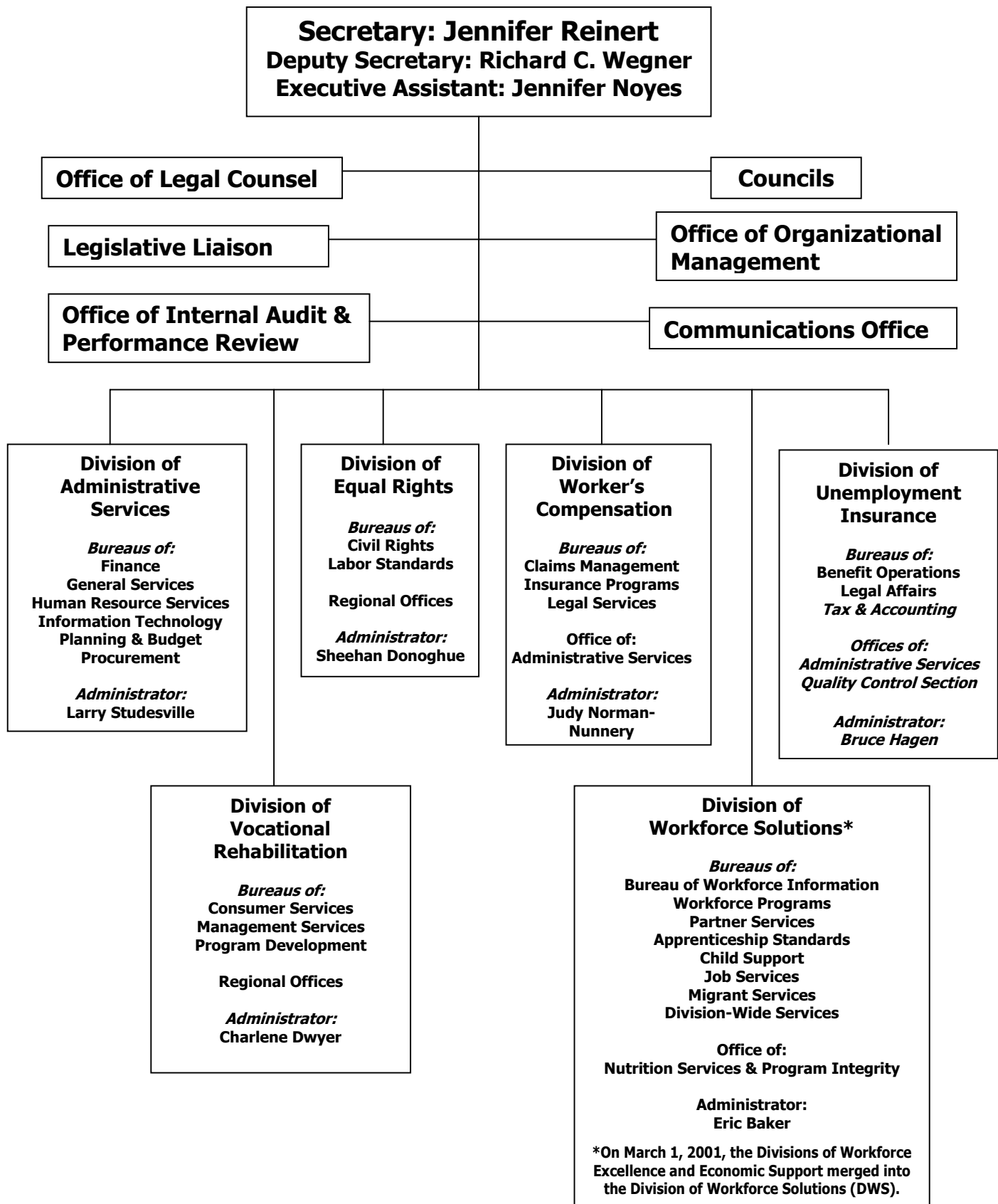
October 2001  
201 East Washington Avenue  
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This Biennial Report is available on the Department's Internet site: <http://www.dwd.wi.us/dwd>

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development is an equal opportunity service provider. If you need assistance to access this material in an alternate format, contact Chris Marschman, DWD Communications Office, 608/261-6705.



# DWD Organization 1999-2001





## **DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW**

The Department of Workforce Development seeks to build a world-class workforce and work environment through effective partnerships and responsive customer services. The State of Wisconsin, through DWD, is committed to offering workers access to jobs and support services they need to succeed. It also acts as a commitment to employers, providing the qualified workers they need.

The department is headed by a Secretary appointed by the Governor and consists of five program divisions and an administrative services division. The merger that formed DWD, on July 1, 1996, combined programs and divisions in the former Departments of Industry, Labor and Human Relations (DILHR) and Health and Social Services (DHSS). The new department focuses on providing a single, comprehensive employment and training system for Wisconsin job seekers and employers.

DWD includes Job Centers, the Wisconsin Works (W-2) program, vocational rehabilitation and school-to-work programs. It also includes unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, civil rights, and labor standards.

### ***Customer Services...***

#### **BUILDING A HEALTHY WORKFORCE AND STRONG ECONOMY**

The Department of Workforce Development is committed to offering programs and services that facilitate the development of a strong Wisconsin economy. It does this through the use of comprehensive job centers, employment and training programs, migrant worker recruitment, vocational rehabilitation services and services to low-income and out-of-work job seekers.

Whether an individual has just lost a job, a single parent needs a better job, a person with a disability who has never had a job, wants to find one or a new graduate is looking for a first job, the Department of Workforce Development has resources that can help.

Wisconsin has 76 Job Centers, which means residents located in virtually any corner of the state can access to valuable job center services. Wisconsin residents can locate their nearest job center by calling 1-888-258-9966. They can also obtain valuable information and services directly from our Web site at [www.dwd.state.wi.us](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us).

In March 2001, the Divisions of Economic Support and Workforce Excellence merged into the new Division of Workforce Solutions to incorporate the evolving philosophy of work over welfare. Responsibility for all income support programs and benefits paid to children, families, and individuals in temporary need; administration of Wisconsin Works (W 2), the work-based welfare replacement program; and child support enforcement are all part of this division.

Wisconsin pioneered the efforts to reform welfare into an employment-centered program by implementing the W-2 program in 1997. After 5 years, former AFDC cash caseloads plummeted 84% as former welfare recipients moved into employment. Much of the success of the program came from the emergence of support services including food stamps, child care, increased education and skill building in assisting those in getting off welfare and achieving self-sufficiency.

## **ENSURING FAIRNESS FOR WISCONSIN RESIDENTS**

The Department of Workforce Development, through its Equal Rights Division, administers laws ensuring equal access to employment, housing, and public accommodations, and those that provide for payment of minimum and prevailing wage rates, timely wage payment, proper hours and conditions of work, and family and medical leave.

Wisconsin became one of the first three states in the nation to prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin or ancestry in employment (1945). It was also the first state to outlaw job discrimination on the basis of a disability (1965) and became the first state to outlaw job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (1982).

## **SERVICES FOR UNEMPLOYED WORKERS**

The department's Unemployment Insurance Division collects employer payroll taxes, pays benefits to eligible unemployed workers, adjudicates disputes, detects welfare and UI fraud, and collects UI and welfare overpayments. Employers pay into the Unemployment Insurance program based on the wages of their employees. Laid off or out-of-work employees can collect unemployment based on the wages they earned while working. It is an insurance program that money is paid into in case of a layoff or other situation that puts an employee out of work. Employers must pay into the program or risk sanctions by the state.

Wisconsin created the nation's first unemployment insurance law, three years ahead of a federal law being passed (1932) and issued the nation's first unemployment check (1936).

## **SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

The department's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation works locally with clients, local agencies and employers to assist people with disabilities to individually pursue, obtain, and maintain employment leading to independence, self-sufficiency, and full inclusion in society. Collaborations with individual companies, coalition groups and advocacy groups have enabled thousands of people with disabilities to actively participate in Wisconsin's workforce.

Research, several years of economic expansion, and common sense has demonstrated the need to focus more intently on employment of people with disabilities. While employment is clearly not for all people with disabilities, for many it can be the key to the door of freedom.

## **SERVICES FOR WORKERS INJURED ON THE JOB**

Worker's Compensation ensures the prompt payment of benefits by private insurance companies and self-insured employers to workers who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses and resolves appeals regarding claims. Wisconsin was the first state to create a successful Worker's Compensation Program in 1911.

Much like Unemployment Insurance, which insures workers who become unemployed, Worker's Compensation is insurance against injury. Employers are required by law to carry private insurance (or self-insure) for their employees in case of injury on the job.



The department is responsible for making sure that employers carry the necessary insurance, strict monitoring of claim activity, enforcement of prompt reporting and payment requirements, and resolving disputes. Dispute prevention is a priority within the department, which has meant fewer resources and less time needed for resolving disputes and considerably lower administrative costs.

## ***Internal Structure and Department Management...***

### **SECRETARY'S OFFICE**

The Secretary's Office is responsible for day-to-day management of the entire department. This includes promoting the department's mission to provide a system of employment-focused programs and services that enables individuals and employers to fully participate in Wisconsin's economy.

Besides the department's Chief Legal Counsel and Legislative Liaison, the Secretary's Office has three other offices attached to it that are responsible for assisting with departmental management.

### ***Monitoring Department Performance***

In January 2001, the department created an office devoted to auditing for program effectiveness. The office serves as a resource for DWD managers to obtain assistance in evaluating their programs. The office has four full-time staff and a director.

### ***Organizational Management***

The Office of Organization Management (OOM) was formed to consolidate, in one place, a number of functions that need to work coherently in order to create high performance programs throughout the department. Much of this office's responsibility is geared toward training, change management and grant writing.

### ***Communications***

The purpose of the Communications Office is to work with each of the divisions to publicize the many programs, innovations, achievements and issues being handled at DWD. It is the responsibility of the Communications Office to ensure that the department responds to requests for information from the news media in an accurate, timely, and comprehensive fashion.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

DWD has one division dedicated to Department management. The Administrative Services Division is similar to the department's program divisions except it provides administrative support services to the program divisions, including human resource, procurement, facilities management, training, communications, budget and fiscal operations, information technology, strategic planning, purchasing and printing.

## **Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS)**

On February 1, 2001, the Department of Workforce Development merged the Division of Economic Support (DES) and the Division of Workforce Excellence (DWE) into the new Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS). The merger created one division to focus on key workforce issues including: alleviating the workforce shortage, building a skilled workforce, integrating workforce issues with economic development issues, and taking W-2 to the next level of helping people retain and advance in their jobs.

### **MISSION**

Provide a seamless continuum of services accessed by employers and members of the workforce and their families with the following results:

- Employers have the workers they need.
- Individuals and families achieve economic self-sufficiency by accessing quality support services, making sound employment decisions, and maximizing their workforce potential.
- All children have the financial support they need from both parents.

DWS administers programs and services that involve: apprenticeships, child support collections, Wisconsin Works (W-2), food stamps, transportation, child care assistance, Welfare to Work (WtW), labor market research and data analysis, Workforce Attachment and Advancement (WAA), Workforce Investment Act (WIA), migrant housing and development of Wisconsin's workforce through the One Stop Job Center delivery system.

### **PROGRAMS**

#### **CHILD CARE**

The Child Care program provides low-income families access to affordable, quality child care through the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program. Child care subsidy program recipients increased nearly 48% from 14,608 children in 8,408 low-income families in July 1999 to 44,788 children in 25,319 low-income families in June 2001. In August 2001, Wisconsin served 43,418 children out of an estimated 148,112 eligible, or 29% of those eligible under Wisconsin law.

#### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- The child care program operated with no waiting lists with an additional \$56 million added to the 2000-01 budget. By the end of the biennium, the subsidy program was more than \$237 million annually.
- Efforts to improve the quality and supply of child care expanded from \$10.9 million to \$42 million in the 2000-01 budget. Initiatives included a \$4 million scholarship program to help more than 1,000 people in the child care workforce improve their qualifications, a \$15 million Early Childhood Excellence Initiative creating early learning centers in 32 locations, and a \$14 million matching grants program to local governments to improve the quality and supply of child care in the state.

#### **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- The Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program will receive a \$218 million increase in funding to meet rising demand for services.
- The Child Care Scholarship, mentoring and Bonus programs will receive a \$6 million funding increase for the next biennium.

- Continued funding for the child care pass-through fund, which offers grants to local government agencies that provide match dollars.
- Continue the Early Childhood Excellence Initiative at 32 child care facilities in the state.

## **CHILD SUPPORT**

The state's child support program contracts with 71 Wisconsin counties and two tribes to provide paternity and child support order establishment and enforcement to 352,626 families. The child support program receives and mails support-related payments to 468,306 families.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Collected \$1.84 billion in the last biennium in child support-related payments.
- Received a waiver to "pass through" 100 percent of child support to W-2 families.
- Ranked first in the nation in dollars collected per full-time employee (for a total of \$547,686).
- Gained national top ten ranking for:
  - The percent of court ordered cases with a collection; and collections per case.
  - The total of all distributed collections; and the total amount distributed as current support.
  - Cost efficiency (child support collected per dollar of administrative cost).
- Implemented the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) including:
  - Child Support Lien Docket (web-based) lists delinquent payers, places liens on homes. (Collected \$1.2 million since October 2000).
  - License suspension, account seizure and vehicle liens.

## **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- Expect the first impact of license suspension for the 2001 fall deer hunting season.
- Convert existing percentage-expressed child support orders to fixed sum orders.
- Review child support guidelines to determine if changes are needed in how much both parents are expected to contribute.
- Implement a program to increase the low-income non-custodial parents' financial and emotional support of their children.
- Provide training in Customer Service issues for Child Support agencies.

## **FOOD STAMPS**

The Food Stamp Program helps to end hunger and improve nutritional health for low-income households. The Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system, or QUEST Card, allows participants to access benefits at food stores and the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program (FSET) manual clarifies policies and assist in program administration.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- In 1999, DWD issued \$124,368,438 in Food Stamp benefits to an average of 182,288 persons in 72,134 households each month.
- In 2000, DWD issued \$134,843,399 in Food Stamp benefits to an average of 198,166 persons in 78,688 households each month.
- From May 2000 – May 2001, persons receiving Food Stamp benefits in Wisconsin grew by 10.4% (6th highest in the U.S.). The national increase was 1.3%.
- In June 2001 - 87,558 households (217,436 persons) received Food Stamp benefits.
- During the QUEST Card conversion (between February and November 2000), while virtually all other states saw a decline in program participation during their conversion to the EBT system, Wisconsin's caseload continued to grow, due to outreach efforts.

## **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- Coordinate transfer of the Food Stamp program to DHFS.
- Pursue federal waivers and initiatives to simplify program administration and improve customer access, including telephone and web based applications.
- Develop an outreach campaign based on input from statewide Focus Groups.
- Work with the Milwaukee School of Engineering and the Milwaukee Hunger Task Force to develop non-traditional methods for retailers, such as farmers' markets, to participate in the delivery of food stamp benefits using EBT.

## **WISCONSIN WORKS (W-2)**

On September 1, 1997 W-2 took effect as a work first program aimed at moving people off cash welfare rolls and into jobs, while providing necessary support services (including child care and transportation assistance, health care and case management services). At that time, nearly 40,000 people, primarily mothers, received cash assistance. Today, that number has dropped nearly 80% to approximately 7,400.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Cash caseloads declined 51% from September 1997 to September 2000, and more than 2/3 of those who left the program had filed income tax returns. Source: Legislative Audit Bureau Report (April 2001)
- Under AFDC, 100% of its recipients were below the federal poverty level. Nearly half (47%) of former W-2 participants who filed 1999 income tax returns were earning above the federal poverty level. Source: Legislative Audit Bureau Report (April 2001)
- 76% of those who left the program at some time since program inception were no longer receiving cash assistance due to employment and/or unearned income. Income includes SSI, child support or increased family income through a spouse or other family member. Source: Closure Study (April 2000)
- 69% of families were receiving between \$34,344 and \$38,004 in income and benefits, assuming all available benefits were being utilized. And 31% had annualized income and benefits between \$31,596 and \$33,840. That compares to \$23,904 for a family on AFDC (benefits include Food Stamps, Childcare, Medicaid/Badgercare, and Case Management). Source: Closure Study (April 2000)
- Of the families who left welfare for work, 71% were still receiving one or more support services. Source: Closure Study (April 2000)
- Convened a Milwaukee W-2 Advisory Panel to re-engineer the service delivery process.
- Provided information on W-2 and TANF-related programs to delegations from Norway, Germany, Netherlands, France, Israel, and Bulgaria.

## **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- The Milwaukee W-2 Advisory Panel will focus on: ensuring participants are appropriately assessed for placement in W-2; strengthening the education and training focus; developing linkages and coordinating services with other agencies working with low income working families. Continuing to strengthen the Department's monitoring of the program.
- Promulgating rules for screening victims of domestic abuse and for training W-2 agency employees in domestic abuse issues.
- Implementation of screening and assessment measures to strengthen agencies' efforts at identifying participants' with learning disabilities, mental health, domestic violence, AODA issues and other limitations.

## **WISCONSIN ADVANCEMENT AND ATTACHMENT (WAA)**

The Workforce Attachment and Advancement (WAA) Program offers services designed to promote upward mobility for low-income working families and non-custodial parents (NCPs). The WAA program provides job retention and training services, to improve employment stability and advancement to higher wage levels. It helps promote job retention and skill development while simultaneously meeting employers' needs for skilled workers. WAA services include: job readiness and placement for the unemployed; basic skills development; job retention services; worker training to promote job advancement and increased earnings; and services to employers to retain workers and provide career progression paths.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Number of WAA participants completing WAA program activities: 1,512.
- WAA's Employment Performance Standard: those who entered unemployed and left the program employed: 46%.
- WAA's Job Retention Performance Standard: those who entered employed left employed: 75%.
- WAA program participants increased their monthly earnings by \$186.31.
- To date, 3,590 people participated in statewide WAA programs. This includes 423 non-custodial parents and those served by W-2 agencies and Workforce Development Boards.

### **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- Wisconsin counties and workforce development boards serve as a resource for employers to maintain stable employment environments for those in the TANF population. Agencies will assist employers with recruitment, retention and orientation sessions to add additional positions within businesses at a higher paying wage.
- Some counties will subcontract services and training programs that assist WAA participants to develop computer skills according to participant needs.
- Counties and WDBs provide cultural competency and/or diversity training to employers with high Hispanic populations to decrease turnover rates.

## **WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT (WIA)**

WIA was implemented in July 2000 upon approval of a five year strategic plan to operate unified One Stop Job Service/Job Center systems monitored by workforce development boards. WIA provides employment and training services for low-income people and replaced the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) June 30, 2001.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Appointed 11 state Workforce Development Board (WDB) areas in 76 Wisconsin Job Centers to lead unified planning for all WIA programs.
- Approved the Workforce Development Boards local five-year plans and local standards to provide all-inclusive services (transportation, food stamps, child care, housing, education, training and job search services) to assist job seekers with national, local and statewide employment opportunities.
- Wisconsin was selected as one of 10 states to participate in the National Governor's Association's Youth Policy Network.
- Assist the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment oversee a variety of employment and training services in the State.
- Provided program direction for Community Reinvestment projects operating in every county.

## **UPCOMING INITIATIVE**

- Enhance Job Center and Partner Agency Collaboration with the strategic plan to continuously improve and expand the one-stop services available to the public in the job centers.

## **APPRENTICESHIPS**

The apprenticeship program offers quality services and strong partnerships with industry, labor, education and government to produce highly skilled and trained apprenticeship graduates. Apprentice numbers have increased approximately 72% in the last ten years and nearly 8% in the last two years.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- In 2000, Wisconsin had 11,534 apprentices and 3,122 employers sponsoring apprenticeship programs. In 2001, 3,208 employers sponsored 11,962 apprentices.
- Certified 438 new employers as qualified apprenticeship sponsors in 2000 and 302 became active employers with apprentices.
- Currently training apprentices in 313 occupations.
- Coordinated with 65 different schools to provide related instruction to apprentices.
- 555 different employer, employee and community-based associations participated in the apprenticeship community; including labor unions and employer associations.
- In 2001, conducted 3,757 apprentice reviews and 780 employer reviews. Reviews are evaluations of the program by either the apprentice or the employer.

## **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- Develop an Apprenticeship program for inmates/residents with the Department of Corrections.
- Develop career counseling and employment placement services for Correctional System clients.

## **DISLOCATED WORKERS SERVICES**

The Dislocated Workers program provides services to dislocated workers to enable them to become re-employed at or above the level of employment previously held. Services include assistance in bridging the gap between unemployment and employment.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Invited more than 200,000 UI Claimants to 110 Job Fairs held throughout the state.
- Held 163 Rapid Response orientations to over 14,000 workers in response to Dislocation Events.
- DWD was awarded more than \$9 million in National Reserve funding from the U.S. Department of Labor to assist dislocated workers as a result of applications submitted on their behalf.
- More than 40,000 Dislocated workers were served through UI Profiling (a series of services to increase the likelihood of obtaining meaningful employment again), Workforce Investment Act and Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs.

## **UPCOMING INITIATIVE**

- Enhance Re-Employment Services to Unemployment Insurance Claimants to help individuals find employment as quickly as possible after a permanent layoff.

## **JOB SERVICE/JOBNET**

Provides high quality public labor exchange and targeted program services to Wisconsin job seekers and employers. With 76 Job Service/Job Center locations across the state, Wisconsin is second to none in serving job seekers and employers. The One Stop Resource Center system provides access to W-2, housing, food stamps, child care, transportation and employment opportunity resources including JobNet, and an automated computerized job order and referral system.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- 137,200 Registrants who received staff services, other than job referrals, were hired.
- 2,711,761 JobNet System accesses via Internet and 194,480 job openings received by JobNet.
- 6,239,650 Orders viewed, via JobNet Touchscreen System in Job Centers.
- 31,218 Registrants who used JobNet Job Order Referral information were hired.

### **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- Enhance Job Center and Partner Agency Collaboration.
- Develop health care workforce statistics to support worker shortage initiatives.

## **MIGRANT SERVICES**

Administers migrant labor laws and assures that migrant housing in Wisconsin is free from health and safety hazards and enforces labor laws with respect to work agreements and contractors. Migrant Services processes alien labor requests and monitors migrant worker access to labor exchange services.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Ensured that more than 6,000 migrant workers and their families had a safe place to live.
- Annually inspected 120 migrant labor camps statewide and certified for occupancy.
- Guaranteed that more than 100 employers had workers available to harvest Wisconsin crops.
- Processed more than 1,500 Foreign Labor requests from Wisconsin employers seeking workers due to labor shortages and/or workers with special job vacancies to fill.

## **REFUGEE SERVICES**

Coordinates state and local efforts to help refugees assimilate into the community as quickly as possible by contracting with local agencies to provide culturally competent services, including employment and training, economic development, youth, elderly, mental health, domestic violence, and health services. Administer income maintenance services, including cash and medical assistance, as well as the State Food Stamp program for aliens. Also provides technical assistance and advocacy to state and local agencies to help providers understand the languages and cultures of refugees and how to integrate refugees into communities.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Nearly 2,600 adult and youth job placements.
- More than 400 small businesses were started or expanded.
- The Bureau received more than \$6 million annually in grants to serve adults and youth.
- Provided health and nutrition assistance and domestic abuse services.
- 1,200 youth increased school attendance and improved their grade point average.

## UPCOMING INITIATIVES

- Focus on the diverse needs of new refugees from all over the world who come to Wisconsin (especially from Eastern Europe and Africa).
- Funding for elderly and youth services are expanding, along with new mental health initiatives in several communities.

## OTHER EMPLOYEE AND EMPLOYER SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY DWS

- **WETAP Transportation Grant:** Wisconsin DOT/DWD jointly operate this \$10 million grant program to help communities provide worker transportation assistance.
- **JobRide Reverse Commute Vanpool Program:** Provides vanpool service from Milwaukee central city to suburban employment opportunities.
- **Accessible Workstations:** Computers in 25 Job Centers allow access to Internet job search tools such as JobNet by persons with disabilities.
- **Older Worker Project:** Provides information and resources for older workers and employers to help them understand how to benefit from this labor pool.
- **Entrepreneurial Outreach:** Grants to Job Centers to offer small business startup assistance to low income job seekers. Helps job seekers determine if they are suited for business ownership and, if so, how to begin the process.
- **Get Checking Program:** A pilot project to teach low income people the importance of financial information and help establish connections to bank accounts.
- **Seasonal Jobs Website:** Allows people to list and search for seasonal job opportunities throughout Wisconsin.
- **Attract, Retain, and Train (A.R.T.) the Right Employees:** Improved attitudinal training for front line managers to help employers address labor shortages and increase employee retention.
- **Tax Credits:** DWS manages state and federal tax credit programs to help employers offset the cost of hiring employees from targeted categories. Programs include Worker Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), Welfare to Work (WtW), Enterprise and Development Zone credits.
- **Child Care Careers Marketing Campaign:** Identified support systems available to help people pursue professional development in childcare.
- **Childcare Feasibility Grants:** To help employers determine the feasibility of offering enhanced childcare services to their employees to help with recruitment and retention.



## **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

### **MISSION**

To obtain, maintain, and improve employment for people with disabilities by working with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) consumers, employers and other partners.

DVR's primary services are:

- Guidance and Counseling
- Finding and Maintaining Employment
- Assistive Technology
- Training

### **PROGRAMS**

- **Counseling and Purchase of Services**

Almost 200 DVR counselors in more than 76 field offices and/or Job Centers throughout Wisconsin provided vocational counseling, purchased employment and training services and assistive technology to jointly develop and advance an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for more than 20,000 individuals with disabilities each year.

- **Business Leadership Network**

The Business Leadership Network (BLN) is a national program, led by employers, that engages the leadership and participation of companies to hire qualified job applicants with disabilities. The BLN offers employers access to a pool of qualified applicants, disability employment information and a network of companies sharing information on disability employment issues.

In Wisconsin, the BLN is a partnership of statewide business leaders, the Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Wisconsin BLN is being piloted in Milwaukee, Waukesha, Dane, Sauk and Dodge counties.

- **Business Enterprise Program**

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) locates, establishes, supervises, and maintains a statewide small business program for eligible people who are visually impaired to operate food service businesses. Typical businesses BEP participants operate include vending machine operations, snack bars, coffee shops, or full-service cafeterias. Sites are located at colleges, industrial sites, Interstate rest-stops and in state and federal buildings.

As small business entrepreneurs, licensed program participants manage their operations in a manner similar to a franchise. Upon completion of training followed by continuous guidance from DVR staff, BEP participants perform all of the routine managerial duties necessary to run their business. Participants are "hands on" managers. DVR staff provide support and problem resolution in numerous areas and act as liaisons with facilities management.

- **Pathways to Independence**

DVR and the Department of Health and Family Services are partners in a five-year demonstration project called "Pathways to Independence." The project is designed to provide people with severe disabilities assurance of long-term health care coupled with intensive vocational rehabilitation. The "Pathways to Independence" project has developed and

implemented an intensive services and work incentives program to better serve people with severe disabilities in their transition to employment. The demonstration project is providing data about how employment outcomes improve when essential support services are not at risk of termination.

- **Transition Services**

In partnership with the Department of Public Instruction, DVR works with high school students who are transitioning from high school to post-secondary education. Our joint goal is to work collaboratively with the student and community resources to provide a smooth transition from school to the world of work.

- **Supported Employment**

This program works to increase employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities by working with a consumer and an employer to find a job suited to the consumer's specific skills and abilities. DVR collaborates with county partners to provide the longer-term supports that may be required to maintain employment.

- **Windmills Training**

This interactive training gives employers and their employees who are not disabled, an opportunity to uncover the stereotypes, myths, biases and fears that create barriers in their attempts to recruit and hire people with disabilities. DVR provides this training to employers at no cost.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS 1999 - 2001**

- In state fiscal years 1999-2001, DVR met or exceeded all performance standards and indicators issued by the United States Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration.
- DVR staff provided services to thousands of job-seekers with disabilities in Wisconsin.

	SFY 1999	SFY 2000	SFY 2001*
Successful Rehabilitations	4,082	4,627	3,886
Wages per hour of rehabilitated consumers	\$7.57	\$7.75	\$8.79
Applicants for services	13,357	15,333	11,671

\*NOTE: Upon implementation of the Order of Selection in August 2000, the number of applicants were significantly reduced as a result of focused agency services on those with the most significant disabilities and with multiple barriers to employment."

- DVR staff are now located in most of the 76 Wisconsin Job Centers and work closely with our Job Center partners to provide better and more efficient employment services to people with disabilities. Wisconsin continues to be a leader in the provision of employment services to people with disabilities through Job Centers.
- After implementing an Order of Selection for all categories in August 2000, new applicants for DVR services were placed on a waiting list. Since that time, more than 8,000 consumers have been activated from the waiting list so that they can begin receiving services. This has resulted in the waiting list for those with the most significant disabilities (Categories 1 and 2) being eliminated. Only a waiting list for Category 3 remains.

- After receiving the recommendations of the DVR Strategic Reform Task Force, DVR formed seven internal workgroups to analyze the recommendations and develop implementation plans. Those workgroups addressed the following areas:
  - Case Service Allocation Formula
  - Case Management Practices
  - Forecasting Caseloads/Expenditures
  - Training Program
  - Third-Party Cooperative Agreements and Other Contracts
  - Internal Program Auditing
  - Counselor Recruitment and Retention

The agency is now implementing the Task Force recommendations in order to further improve services to people with disabilities.

- The department made an s.13.10 request for \$500,000 GPR of additional match funding in December 2000 and the Joint Committee on Finance approved it. With those funds DVR was able to decrease its reliance on third-party cooperative agreements from an estimated need of \$8.8 million in SFY2001 to an approximate SFY2001 level of \$6.1 million.

## **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- **Ticket to Work**

Wisconsin is one of 13 early implementation states for Ticket to Work. The Ticket to Work program is part of new legislation signed into law in 1999, and its goal is to increase choices for Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities in obtaining employment, vocational rehabilitation or other support services from public and private providers. We anticipate that tickets will be mailed to Wisconsin beneficiaries by the Social Security Administration in late 2001.

- **Business Enterprises Services and Training (BEST)**

This program will combine and replace the current Home Based Enterprise (HBE) and Business Enterprise Program (BEP). The purpose of the BEST Program will be to help develop and implement competitive, self sustaining and unsubsidized businesses for appropriate DVR consumers. The program will provide services to all DVR consumers interested in developing their own business venture.

## Division of Equal Rights

### MISSION

- To protect the rights of all people in Wisconsin under civil rights and labor standards laws.
- To achieve compliance through education, outreach, and enforcement by empowered and committed employees.
- To perform responsibilities with reasonableness, efficiency, and fairness.

### PROGRAMS

The Equal Rights Division is responsible for enforcing the Fair Employment, Fair Housing, and Public Accommodations, and Family and Medical Leave laws in the Bureau of Civil Rights. The Bureau of Labor Standards enforces all of the Labor Standards Laws, including Hours of Work and Overtime, Minimum Wage, Wage Claims, Child Labor, and Plant Closing laws as well as setting and enforcing the Prevailing Wage rates for state building and local and municipal building projects. The division also sets the prevailing wage rates for all state highway construction projects.

This Division is committed to the concept that education will help eliminate discrimination and inadvertent violations of other laws enforced by the division. To help realize that concept, Division personnel participate in more than 100 presentations and seminars each year.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Amount of unpaid wages collected for Wisconsin employees by the Labor Standards Bureau doubled in the last two years from the previous biennium (\$6,620,444 as compared to \$3,125,408).
- Within the past two years the Construction Wage Standards Section has reduced the average number of days it takes to investigate complaints from 300 to 219 days.
- The division purchased TTY software to assist customers with hearing loss.
- The division successfully reduced the average number of days it takes to investigate a civil rights case from 191 days in previous biennium. In addition, the number of cases awaiting a hearing decision longer than 90 days after completion of the record has been cut in half.
- The Equal Rights Division Labor and Management Advisory Council (LMAC) sponsored an all employee conference focusing on computer skills training, understanding people from different cultures, and positive methods of communicating with co-workers and customers.

<b>Civil Rights Case Data</b>	<b>SFY00</b>	<b>SFY01</b>
Number of cases received	4,248	4,278
Cases completed	4,877	5,045
Cases sent to Hearing Section	1,109	1,080
Hearing Section decisions appealed to LIRC*	88	114
Decisions appealed to Circuit Court, as well as FMLA cases that go directly to court	46	35
	<b>FFY00</b>	<b>FFY01</b>
<b>EEOC cases processed</b>	1,853	1,925
<b>\$\$ paid by EEOC for cases processed</b>	\$926,500	\$962,500

\*LIRC: Wisconsin Labor and Industry Review Commission

<b>Labor Standards Case Data</b>	<b>SFY00</b>	<b>SFY01</b>
Unpaid wage complaints received	4,775	4,624
Complaints resolved	4,728	4,488
\$\$ recovered for claimants	\$2,324,168	\$4,296,276
<b>Construction Wage Case Data</b>		
Construction Wage complaints received	97	160
Complaints completed	75	135
Wage Determinations*	1,570	1,663
Owed wages collected	\$111,982	\$132,872

\* A wage determination consists of the wage rates, by trade, for a construction project.

### **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- In May 2001, the Construction Wage Standards Section began conducting random project visits around the state to improve compliance with state prevailing wage laws.
- In July 2001, the Labor Standards Compliance Section conducted educational child labor sweeps around the state to make employers more aware of state child labor laws.
- A major project in the next biennium will be the redesign of the Fair Employment Law complaint form. Since employment discrimination cases are 90% of the workload in the Civil Rights Bureau, this project is critical to efforts to improve customer service. A well-designed form to initiate complaints will benefit both complainants and employers by improving the clarity of information received at the first stage of the process.
- The division will be involved in the department's Re-engineering of Vital Services (REVS) program. REVS was initiated due to many factors that require the department to evolve. The division will be looking closely at laws and policies.
- Part of the division's strategic plan over the next five years is to conduct an analysis of its many publications to ensure that they are customer-friendly.

## Division of Unemployment Insurance

### MISSION

The Division of Unemployment Insurance provides temporary economic assistance to Wisconsin's eligible unemployed workers.

### PROGRAMS

- Manages the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.
- Collects UI taxes from approximately 120,000 state employers.
- Pays benefits to eligible workers under state and federal programs.
- Assures integrity of benefit payments.
- Manages the Department's labor law clinic program providing employers with information about the laws administered by the Department.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Distributed more than \$5 million in UI benefits to approximately 250,000 claimants each year.
- Provided more than \$11 million in Trade Adjustment Act benefits to workers affected by plant closings.
- Resolved 22,000 appeals of disputed unemployment benefits cases annually.
- Tax/Wage Reporting for employers via the Internet became available statewide in third quarter 2000. 14,835 employers used this system to file their second quarter 2001 report.
- Internet registration for new employers was implemented in October 1999.
- Reviewed all division communications with its customers to ensure that its communications are written in easy-to-understand "plain language."
- Approximately 30 labor law clinics were produced annually, with clinics being offered in all areas of the state of Wisconsin and approximately 100 employers attending each clinic.

	1999	2000
<b>Number of Claimants Paid</b>	235,567	278,483
Amount of Benefits Paid	\$495,991,103	\$548,362,440
Balance in Trust Fund 12/31	\$1,771,000,000	\$1,815,000,000

### UPCOMING INITIATIVES

- Re-engineer to automate the scheduling of appeals cases to improve customer service and allow staff to handle the appeals workload more efficiently.
- Implement an Internet Claims System by November 1, 2001.
- A detailed design for the redesigned UI tax and wage systems will be completed by spring of FY 2002.
- DWD-UI/Department of Revenue will be working to identify and collaborate on initiatives that affect common customers.
- A workgroup representing DWD-UI/DOR/Department of Financial Institutions is developing a joint employer registration application as part of the WIGOV portal. DWD-UI/DOR will continue to develop a joint reporting process for paper reports.
- Develop and implement a four-year plan to meet increased demand for services expected from a projected increase in insured unemployment rate from 2.0% in 2000 to 2.8% in 2001.

## **Division of Worker's Compensation**

### **MISSION**

The promotion of healthy, safe work environments by maintaining a balanced system of services to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Wisconsin Worker's Compensation Act.

### **PROGRAM**

Wisconsin's Worker's Compensation program, established in 1911, was the nation's first constitutional worker's compensation program and was quickly recognized for its excellence. Since its inception many states and even foreign countries have used Wisconsin's program as a model. Thanks to rigorous promotion of safe workplaces, sound management and consistent efforts to ensure compliance with the Wisconsin Worker's Compensation Act, the Wisconsin's Worker's Compensation program is widely recognized today as the nation's premier worker's compensation program.

Division staff manage the worker's compensation claims program, provide assistance to claimants, employers and insurance representatives, set permanent disability ratings for payments due claimants, monitor promptness and accuracy of payments, solve claim problems to avoid formal disputes, and resolve health cost fee disputes. Division attorneys conduct informal sessions and formal administrative hearings to resolve disputed claims between claimants and employers.

Division staff also oversee the insurance functions of the worker's compensation program by managing the self-insurers program, the uninsured employers fund, the wrap-up insurance program, the insurance education, enforcement and compliance program and serve as liaison with the Wisconsin Rating Bureau and the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

#### **Compliance**

The Uninsured Employer Fund (UEF), which covers valid claims filed by employees injured while working for illegally insured Wisconsin employers, remains strong with a \$9.1 million balance as of 6/30/01. Staff accomplishments include:

- 73,582 Wisconsin employer investigations were completed.
- 2,889 employers were assessed penalties for operating without WC insurance.
- Collected penalties of \$2.5 million from illegally uninsured employers.
- New insurance coverage resulted for about 80,000 Wisconsin employees.
- 125 claims for the UEF were investigated and processed.
- The UEF paid \$1.7 million to or on behalf of injured workers.
- Developed an automated levy filing system for collecting delinquent uninsured employer penalties.
- The Self-Insured program covers about 200 private and 50 public employers. (Self-insured employers have met the financial requirements to insure themselves for worker's compensation coverage in Wisconsin.)
- Thirteen new wrap-up projects were approved and added to the 12 projects currently being monitored. (Wrap-ups are large construction projects (over \$25 million) where one worker's compensation policy is obtained to cover all contractors and subcontractors to promote safety and cut costs.)

## **Technology**

The Worker's Compensation Division is using new technology to improve customer service, streamline the claim process and generally make the program better for the people it serves. Staff accomplishments include:

- Implemented a successful Insurers' Pending Report System on the Internet.
- Automated internal follow-up system for overdue claim actions.
- Implemented Internet capability to submit required claim reports.
- Developed training assistance for insurers through the Internet.
- Monitored an average of 54,000 claims annually for prompt and accurate payments.
- Issued an average of \$2.2 million of supplemental disability benefits to injured workers.
- Paid an average of \$185,500 in benefits to dependents of fatally-injured workers.

## **Resolving Conflict**

Timely resolution of claim disputes is an important part of the Worker's Compensation Division program. Resolving claim disputes quickly saves taxpayers money and insurers litigation related costs, reduces lost work time for companies, and, most importantly, allows injured workers to receive important benefits and services more quickly.

The Wisconsin Worker's Compensation Division has one of the lowest cost per claim litigation rates in the country as noted by the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau and the Workers' Compensation Research Institute. Staff accomplishments include:

- Conducted an average of 1,350 formal hearings annually.
- Issued an average of 8,700 judicial orders annually to resolve injury claim disputes.
- Resolved an additional 2,000 cases through alternative dispute resolution.
- Reduced the median statewide time it takes to get a hearing by 10%.
- Developed the part-time wage law for codification to formalize division policy under the Worker's Compensation Act as it applies to determination of injured worker benefits.

## **Safety**

The Division's safety initiative issued 250 safety report cards annually to employers with accident rates higher than average for their business type, and 2,100 Certificates of Recognition annually to safety-conscious Wisconsin employers who were accident free for more than 4 and 5 years. For the millennium a safety calendar depicting safety changes in the workplace from 1911 to 2000 was developed and distributed.

## **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- Reach the six-month goal for holding hearings statewide through additional staff and alternative dispute resolution options to provide more timely hearings for injured workers.
- Enhance the ability for insurers to submit required reports using Internet applications.
- Automate the UEF penalty calculation process to expedite the collection process for uninsured employer penalties.
- Complete evaluation of optical imaging to determine appropriate future uses within the division and department a safety campaign aimed at youth entering the workplace.
- Develop partnerships to launch a safety campaign aimed at youth entering the workplace.



## **Division of Administrative Services**

### **MISSION**

To provide department-wide integrated management systems that will assist divisions and the department in achieving strategic goals, and provide customers with efficient, responsive and high quality administrative support services.

### **PROGRAMS**

The Administrative Services Division provides a wide variety of customer-focused, central support services to DWD programs, staff and DWD partner agencies. Though few outside DWD ever come into contact with this division, its role is vital to the successful operation of the Department.

The division is organized into the bureaus of Budget and Planning, Facilities Management, Finance, Information Technology Services, Human Resource Services, and Procurement. The Administrative Services Division provides strategic planning, budget management, human resource management, payroll, financial accounting, purchasing, facilities management, fleet services, health and safety, telecommunications, information technology and department-wide project management

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Completed the DWD Y2K project without any operational or systems problems.
- Implemented a new web-based accounts payable system for DVR to fully incorporate expenditure activity for DVR clients into the department's financial system.
- Implemented an innovative Payroll Time and Attendance Distribution system to reduce the time required to process the bi-weekly payroll and improve the accuracy of data.
- Developed an internal Financial Re-engineering Team to identify ways to improve the DWD financial accounting systems.
- Implemented a data warehouse that will help better deliver financial information in an electronic format and improve the timeliness of reporting.
- DWD and DHFS developed a structure for shared governance of the Client Assistance for Re-employment and Economic Support (CARES) system with input from local agencies.
- Implemented an automated program that will reduce the administrative accounting costs associated with processing of credit cards payments and other small purchases.
- Implemented an internet-based system permitting employers to file their quarterly unemployment insurance tax and wage reports on line.

### **UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

- Redesign the DWD Internet site to improve and simplify public access to information and services.
- Further improve the department's financial accounting and reporting systems.
- Develop a financial reporting tool which managers can use to more effectively review and assess the financial status of their operations.
- Improve the DWD business continuity plan through the incorporation of new contingency and disaster recovery planning strategies.
- Increase CARES accessibility through better use of technology.
- Continuous service quality improvements.
- Lower the costs of providing administrative services.